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Security Council

Seventy-second year

Provisional

8050th meeting
Thursday, 14 September 2017, 10.50 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Alemu	(Ethiopia)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Llorentty Soliz
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Egypt	Mr. Aboulatta
	France	Mr. Michon
	Italy	Mr. Lambertini
	Japan	Mr. Kawamura
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Russian Federation	Mr. Iliichev
	Senegal	Mr. Seck
	Sweden	Mr. Skoog
	Ukraine	Mr. Yelchenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Rycroft
	United States of America	Ms. Sison
	Uruguay	Mr. Bermúdez

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2017/746)

Letter dated 30 August 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/201/747)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (S/2017/746)

Letter dated 30 August 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/201/747)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of the Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Jeremiah Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2017/746, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, and document S/2017/747, which contains a letter dated 30 August 2017 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to Mr. Mamabolo.

Mr. Mamabolo: I am grateful for the opportunity to brief the Council once again on the situation in Darfur.

Per resolution 2363 (2017), the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) has proceeded with its reconfiguration while continuing to implement its strategic priorities on the protection of civilians, mediation between the Government of the Sudan and armed movements, and support for the mediation of intercommunal conflicts.

UNAMID has started phase one of the reconfiguration, namely, the closure of 11 team sites and a reduction of military personnel strength from 15,845 to 11,395 and police personnel strength from 3,403 to 2,888. Since June, UNAMID has closed four team sites in North and East Darfur, and the remaining seven will be closed by the end of September. The Mission has developed plans to deploy the Jebel Marra Task Force and requested the Government for land to establish a temporary operating base in Golo. The protection strategy for Jebel Marra is also being developed to ensure coordination with humanitarian partners and tailor military and police activities to the area. The review of the civilian personnel, commensurate with the new troop ceiling and configuration, has been completed and will be reflected in the submission of the revised UNAMID 2017/18 budget.

Regarding the situation in Darfur, after the brief clashes in East and North Darfur in May and June between the Government of the Sudan Armed Forces and the Sudan Liberation Army/Minni Minawi (SLA/MM), supported by the Sudan Liberation Army/Transitional Council and the Justice and Equality Movement, Darfur largely remained calm. The clashes are a reminder of the need for a commitment by all parties to cease hostilities and to take major strides towards a permanent and lasting peace.

With the exception of the violent clashes between the Rezeigat and the Ma'alia in East Darfur, which resulted in significant casualties, there has been a reduction in the number of intercommunal incidents, owing partly to the intervention of the native administration, community leaders and local committees supported by the Government, the United Nations country team and UNAMID. Violence against civilians, banditry and criminal activities continued, albeit on a smaller scale, with the majority of the cases occurring against internally displaced persons (IDPs), farmers and women. On the human rights situation, there has been some progress. The President pardoned six human rights defenders on 29 August. Efforts are being made at the local level to extend judicial services beyond urban centres, and the perpetrators of criminal incidents, in some instances, have been apprehended. However, much still needs to be done to improve the overall human rights situation.

Most of the insecurity currently experienced in Darfur can be attributed to the tensions originating from the underlying causes of the conflict, exacerbated by the proliferation of arms in the hands of civilians and militia groups. Intercommunal disputes, usually triggered by competition over land, water, livestock and mineral resources, have become increasingly violent

owing to the availability of weapons. On 6 August, the Government of the Sudan launched the third phase of the arms-control campaign, reiterating that only members of the regular forces were to be allowed to carry, acquire or stockpile weapons or ammunition.

Subsequently, the Second Vice-President conducted a sensitization tour of Darfur followed by initiatives in the various states led by the Walis. Reactions to the arms-collection campaign in Darfur vary, with the opposition and non-signatory movements, some tribes and militia groups critical of Government intentions, with others such as the Arab militia leader Musa Hilal opposed outright to the process.

Meanwhile, progress in the implementation of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur remains limited, particularly on those outstanding issues that are fundamental to sustainable peace in Darfur, such as durable solutions to displacement, the administration of land, water and other scarce resources, and the issue of armed militias. UNAMID continues to engage the remaining Commissions and Fund of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, but their lack of capacity and presence in Darfur continues to pose a challenge.

Efforts by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, with the support of UNAMID, for a cessation-of-hostilities agreement and the resumption of direct negotiations towards an inclusive peace agreement to end the conflict, have remained inconclusive. Further to my engagement in Paris with Abdul Wahid, Minni Minawi and Gibril Ibrahim, I have sent a report to the parties detailing the current status of the mediation process, especially the stalemate in the negotiations on cessation of hostilities.

The movements insist on a sequencing of the negotiations from the cessation of hostilities to discussions on the controversial issue of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. The Government, on the other hand, insists on a commitment to the Document as a basis for negotiations and Doha as the venue for the talks. Abdul Wahid maintains his refusal to join the peace process. While we will continue to engage both parties to break this stalemate, we call upon the Council and those with influence on the parties to stress the importance of a political settlement and desist from bringing more suffering to the very people that they profess to represent.

Displacements were reported following the clashes between the Government of the Sudan and the SLA/MM in North Darfur in May and June, although the figures could not be confirmed. IDPs continue to require protection and humanitarian assistance on a daily basis. There is an urgent need for the Government of the Sudan, with the support of the international community, to find sustainable solutions that would enable the IDPs to return to their homes voluntarily.

Cooperation with the Government of the Sudan has noticeably improved. The humanitarian operating environment continued to improve, with partners reporting faster approval for movements within Darfur and fewer denials of access. UNAMID also continues to experience decreased movement restrictions. UNAMID remains committed to working with the Government authorities to overcome the remaining access challenges.

The issuance of visas and the clearance of essential equipment continue to improve. However, the Mission is still awaiting the issuance of visas for human rights staff. The shipments currently being held represent a fifth of the number held this time last year.

The cooperation of the Government for the reconfiguration of UNAMID, particularly for the establishment of a temporary operating base in Golo, is a matter of priority.

In conclusion, I would like to express UNAMID's appreciation to the Council for the support that we continue to receive.

The President: I thank Mr. Mamabolo for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those Council members who wish to make statements.

Mr. Bermúdez (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, allow me to thank the Mr. Jeremiah Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), for his presentation of the report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/746).

Uruguay underlines the report's indication that, despite the decrease in armed clashes between the Government of the Sudan and rebel forces, the security and human rights situation in Darfur remains unstable. It should also be noted that one of the main hotspots of violence in Darfur continues to involve intercommunal conflicts, which are closely related to the root causes of the conflict and are exacerbated by armed militias, as well as by the fact that weapons are proliferating among

for civilian population and that rule-of-law institutions continue to lack the capacity and effective means to meet those challenges.

My delegation considers it vital that the Government of the Sudan and the armed movements comply with their several declarations concerning the cessation of hostilities and move on to the next stages of the peace process facilitated by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, with the support of the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and the Sudan and the Joint Special Representative for the African Union–United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. Progress in those areas would allow for the creation of the necessary conditions for effectively addressing the root causes of the conflict, such as intercommunal conflicts, and, moreover, contribute to the safe return to their homes of the more than 2 million internally displaced persons in Darfur.

As noted in the report of the Secretary-General, UNAMID is moving forward in its reconfiguration in accordance with the Security Council's adoption of resolution 2363 (2017). As we have repeatedly said, the Government of the Sudan's cooperation with the Council and UNAMID is indispensable for successfully achieving that transition. We note that the general environment in which UNAMID is operating has shown signs of improvement, while, at the same time, increases in the number of criminal incidents and in the restrictions have also been noted.

Nevertheless, the Mission continues to face several logistical difficulties that continue to hamper its work, including delays in issuing visas, especially for human rights workers in the Area. In that regard, we urge the Government of the Sudan to expedite the process of resolving outstanding operational restrictions, while living up to all its obligations in that respect and sustaining the positive spirit that characterized the review process of UNAMID. Furthermore, although the Mission is drawing down, we are aware of the important and continuing necessary role that it plays in the area of the protection of civilians, including, for example, monitoring human rights violations, carrying out daily patrols and supporting intercommunal conflict mediation.

To conclude, allow me to express Uruguay's gratitude to all UNAMID personnel, the United Nations country team and humanitarian workers, who continue to work tirelessly and often in difficult conditions so as to achieve sustainable peace in Darfur.

Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation thanks Joint Special Representative Mamabolo for his briefing to us on the situation in Darfur and on the status of the implementation of Doha Document for Peace in Darfur.

As we have stated over the past several months, we would like to highlight again the fact that clashes between the Sudanese Government and rebel groups have been considerably reduced in comparison to previous years. Although intercommunal conflicts were noted, resolving them is nevertheless linked to the root causes of the conflict. Strict compliance with their unilateral declarations on the cessation of hostilities by the Government and armed groups allows for progress to be made in the peace process, which the African Union High-level Implementation Panel, the Joint Special Representative and the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for South Sudan and the Sudan are facilitating so diligently.

The relative calm afforded by the cessation of hostilities must lead to bolstering the political processes aimed at achieving peace in Darfur. The national dialogue has allowed for advances in governance reform with the participation of various political parties. It is important that those new structures, which have resulted from the national dialogue, be able to focus on the implementation of the Doha Document. However, it is critical to resolve differences with regard to the Document. Implementing the provisions of the Doha Document would allow for addressing root issues, such as the adoption of land-related laws. Moreover, it also provides for a permanent ceasefire involving the armed movements and the disarmament of the civilian population and militia, among other components, that constitute fundamental requirements for establishing stable and lasting peace in Darfur. We therefore call on the movements that are not signatories to the Doha Document to resume talks and move forward in the political process, which represents the only way out of the conflict in the Sudan.

Concerning progress in implementing the recommendations set out in resolution 2363 (2017), which we adopted several months ago, we believe that it is crucial to work towards ensuring State presence and strengthening the institutions and the police in the territories from which the African Union-United

Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) will draw down. To carry out the reintegration processes and ensure the security of the civilian population, there must be constant and fluid coordination between the Government, the United Nations country team and UNAMID.

We also welcome Government measures to strengthen judicial institutions — a key measure for achieving success in the reconciliation processes and the fight against impunity. In the same vein, we believe that the Government's campaign to collect illegal weapons and unlicensed vehicles in the Darfur region is a positive step, which, despite the complications it is experiencing, is noteworthy. Those governmental measures, which are in line with the process of peacebuilding and being carried out by the United Nations, require the support of the international community.

In addition to the challenges I mentioned here, the humanitarian situation of internally displaced persons continues to concern us. Although there were no major displacements this year, millions of internally displaced persons remain exposed to various forms of violence, among whom women and children are the main victims. Let us hope that progress will be made in the plan for the voluntary resettlement of internally displaced persons. Moreover, the effects of inclement weather, such as the flash floods in the Kalma camp, and the spread of disease have claimed several lives since June. We trust that the Government, as it has demonstrated before, will ensure the necessary support for enabling UNAMID to comply freely with its mandate and for granting access to humanitarian workers so that they can carry out the tasks of caring for those affected.

In conclusion, we recognize that there are many challenges in this new phase of UNAMID, and we would like to commend the work that has been carried out in the Sudan over the past 10 years. Their work and dedication in search of peace is one of the most noble and difficult tasks in the world. We express our gratitude to them.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Mohamed (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I wish you every success. I also would like to thank the Permanent Representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt, who successfully guided the work of the Council during the month of August. Finally, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2017/746) and, of course, Mr. Mamabolo, Joint Special Representative for the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, both for his briefing and his sincere cooperation.

I welcome the outcome of the twenty-first consultative meeting between the African Union and the United Nations, which took place last week in your country, Mr. President. The meeting reaffirmed the central aspect of the strategic partnership between the African Union and the United Nations and called for a strengthening of the partnership in order to achieve peace and stability throughout our country, Africa. The partnership between the two organizations through the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) is an outstanding example of the vitality we wish to see. We hope to see a strengthened partnership, especially with regard to African capabilities and capacities, early warning mechanisms, conflict prevention and resolution, rebuilding and the necessary financing for peacekeeping missions in Africa.

In recent months, the five states of Darfur have seen the mobilization of all segments of society and all institutions to lay the foundations of peace and stability, thanks to the efforts of the Sudanese Government and the United Nations — particularly UNAMID and the African Union. That has enabled the consolidation of security and stability throughout the entire region after the rebel movements were neutralized and forced to withdraw from Darfur and the Sudan, so that all can finally focus on implementing development projects and strengthening intercommunal reconciliation to set Darfur back on a positive path to contribute to building a modern Sudan — as it was once doing.

As the Council may recall, the President of the Sudan, Mr. Omar Hassan Ahmad Al-Bashir, expressed the intention of the Government to implement the campaign to collect illegal arms from all Sudanese citizens. The campaign was launched under the supervision of the Vice-President of the Republic, Mr. Hasabo Mohammed Abdul Rahman, following the adoption of a staggered national plan that starts with awareness raising about the need to surrender weapons and then with the implementation of one of the oldest laws in the Sudan, on weapons and ammunitions, for those who continue to violate it. Preliminary reports indicate that the plan is thus far progressing well,

but the collection, marking, seizure and elimination of weapons is a very costly operation that requires significant technical capabilities. That is why we called upon the international community to lend its assistance to ensure that this crucially important plan to sustain peace and security is implemented. As the Council is aware, the proliferation of weaons among civilians is one of the drivers of conflict. That is why we again call upon the international community to help implement the plan. Its positive impact will not be limited to Darfur alone, but to all of the Sudan.

Furthermore, the measures that the Government of the Sudan intends to undertake in cooperation with its brotherly and neighbouring States are significant, especially in terms of limiting the flow of weapons. That is an important question that also requires the assistance and attention of the international community.

Following the Council's adoption of resolution 2363 (2017), which enshrines the Secretary-General's proposals and those of the African Union's Commission aimed at reconfiguring UNAMID and reducing its size, the Sudanese Government reaffirmed its commitment to cooperating and coordinating with UNAMID to implement the resolution.

The first stage saw the closure of three positions, and we intend to close 11 more towards the end of the year. The withdrawal and closure of various UNAMID positions sends a positive signal that international community confirms that the situation has returned to normal and that security is being maintained. That has been demonstrated through the massive return of displaced persons to their villages, as well as the addition of a great many heads and chiefs of rebel movements to the peace process. Consultations are still under way and are taking place at various levels. They are aimed at convincing the other chiefs and heads of armed groups to join the peace process under the auspices of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel.

At a logical and political level, the changes that we are witnessing in Darfur force us to reconsider the sanctions that have been imposed on the Sudan since 2005 pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005). Those sanctions must be reviewed. We are open to listen to and consider any ideas, including those presented by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

As we have stated on numerous occasions, the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur remains the only way to achieve lasting peace in Darfur. It is one of the more comprehensive solutions among those aimed at eliminating the crisis. Despite the mild refusal of certain heads of rebel groups to support the Document, over 85 per cent of its provisions have been implemented. There is therefore a need to continue along that course in order to ensure that peace returns to Darfur and all of the Sudan.

Efforts made by Qatar, the sponsor of the Doha Document for Peace, to rehabilitate Darfur and rebuild villages in order to facilitate the voluntary return of citizens to the region, as well as its support for development projects, have contributed significantly to the current situation in Darfur. We would also like to thank many other brotherly States, such as China, Japan and Turkey, as well as the League of Arab States. The Government of the Sudan wishes to see the international community continue to lend its support to ensure that we are able to implement the remaining aspects of the Doha Document and to convince non-signatory parties to accede to it as soon as possible. Thus, we could put an end to fighting, which would enable us to implement disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, the return of refugees and reconciliation among communities.

In conclusion, we would like to convey our gratitude to UNAMID for its many contributions. We would like to pay tribute to the peacekeepers who have laid down their lives for the Sudan. Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to troop- and police-contributing countries. We would like to reiterate our readiness to cooperate with regional and international partners until all components of UNAMID have left our country — thereby demonstrating and proving the success of this huge peacekeeping operation.

The President: I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.20 a.m.